

Pleasant Hill History Center Newsletter

Volume 7 Issue 4
June 2020



Pleasant Hill History Center

Pleasant Hill, Ohio

P.O. Box 82
Pleasant Hill, Ohio 45359

Mission Statement

“To preserve the history of Pleasant Hill and Newton Township through documents, pictures, and artifacts.”

Historic

Pleasant Hill and Newton Township

“Preserving our local history by telling our stories.”

Pleasant Hill History Center Newsletter

Summer 2020

A Note from the President

You don't need me to tell you that 2020 is unlike any year we've lived through. The effects are felt every day in every aspect of our lives. Here at the History Center our first priority is the safety of our members. We have made the decision to keep the History Center closed for now. All programs for this year have been postponed. We hope all our members stay safe during this crisis.

Because of the current situation we will not be holding our annual meeting at the History Center. Our current plan is to hold the meeting as a Zoom meeting which will be open to the entire membership. The meeting will be on July 23, 2020 at 7pm. Please register by 10am with Jerry Warner at relaxjw@gmail.com and an email will be sent to you with the meeting link.

We have three positions that need filled on the Executive Board. One is for a village member and two are for township members. Amy King is running for reelection for one of the township positions, but we still need the other two positions filled. Please consider volunteering.

You don't need to have special skills to serve on the board. You just need to have an interest in our history. If you've enjoyed reading the newsletters or our Facebook pages, then you should consider serving a 2-year term on the board. You can email me at relaxJW@gmail.com or you call me at 937-308-1766 and leave a message that you're interested.

Jerry Warner, President

Donation

Thank you, Don Cress, for your donation to the History Center. We appreciate it very much.

Membership News

We have 109 partners and 10 business friends. If your membership expires this year, you will receive a notice either in an email or written on this newsletter.

Questions about your membership, call Dawn Spittler at 937-632-0000. Thank you for your support.

Dawn Spittler, Membership Chairman

Kroger

It is once again time to sign up for Kroger Community Rewards. This program is a great fundraiser for our museum. Our quarterly checks help pay our utility bills! Check your receipt to see if you are still signed up!

If you have no charity listed, please consider us.

Programs at the History Center

Due to restrictions, all programs scheduled at the History Center were cancelled. They will be rescheduled at later dates. Look for more information as we get back to normal.

The Museum is currently closed until restrictions are lifted.

Our hours will be every Monday from 3:00 - 7:00 when we open again.

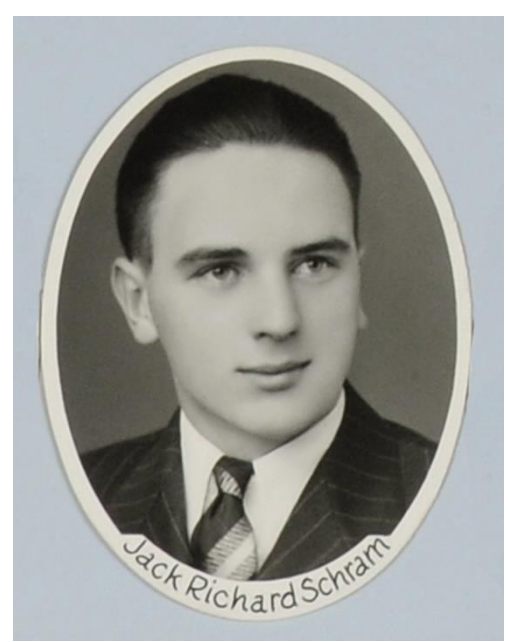
**Be sure to check our web site at: Pleasanthillhistorycenter.com
and visit us on Facebook**

Jack Schram and the Ghost Army

Jack Schram graduated from Newton High School in 1940. He enlisted in the Army in 1942. Jack was assigned to the 3133rd Signal Service Company, also called the Sonic Deception Unit.

They used rubber tanks and recorded sounds to fool the Nazi Army into thinking that the Allied Forces were larger than they were. The unit recorded sounds made by tanks at Fort Knox in preparation for their mission in Europe.

Here is what happened on a typical mission: The Ghost Army would pull into the line at night, and set up a command post. On the following night the show would start. The men causing the sonic deception would head up to the front with their equipment. The large speakers would be pointed at the German lines. They would blast *tank sounds*. These sounds could be heard five miles away.



The rubber tanks would be inflated and put into place. Logs would be dragged to make it look like tank tracks in the dirt.

Soon, the Germans would attack the tanks. Not only were they using their ammunition on the tanks, but they were spending time on them. This gave the real army time to attack at a different point.

The deception worked! This information was classified for fifty years after the war.

As for Jack, he was in Italy until the end of the war. He was discharged in 1946 and returned to the United States. Jack continued his studies at The Ohio State University. He graduated with two degrees, both in Agriculture and Engineering. Upon graduation, he taught at Michigan State University. He then joined the Ford Motor Company, retiring in 1983. Jack died in 2011. We are thankful for his work deceiving the Germans, in order to help win the war.

A documentary on the Ghost Army was created by PBS. Many books have been written about this group of soldiers. One such book is titled, *The Ghost Army of World War II* by Beyers & Sayles. There are also Youtube videos on the subject.



Ghost Tank being filled with air



The Ghost Army in action

Ben Cassel Cane Mill



The men identified in the above picture from a 1976 article in the *Stillwater Valley Advertiser* are: Unknown, Charles Gibboney, George Shafer, Unknown, A.C. Lukemire, Unknown, Unknown. However, the ages do not match with the date of the picture. The picture is from the late 1890's or 1900.

The Ben Cassel Cane Mill was located south of Circle Hill on State Route 721. The mill was run by a stationary steam boiler owned by the Gibboney family.

Most farmers grew a small patch of cane to make into molasses for their pancakes, cornbread, or baking pies and cakes.

Farmers from the area would bring their cane to be crushed and cooked. The cane was run through the crusher which consisted of large rollers. The stalks were squeezed and the juice extracted. This juice was then cooked in long pans to evaporate. The resulting sorghum molasses was then put into the farmer's containers.

The steam engine was moved to the Gibboney Saw Mill. It was there that it exploded killing Charles Gibboney.

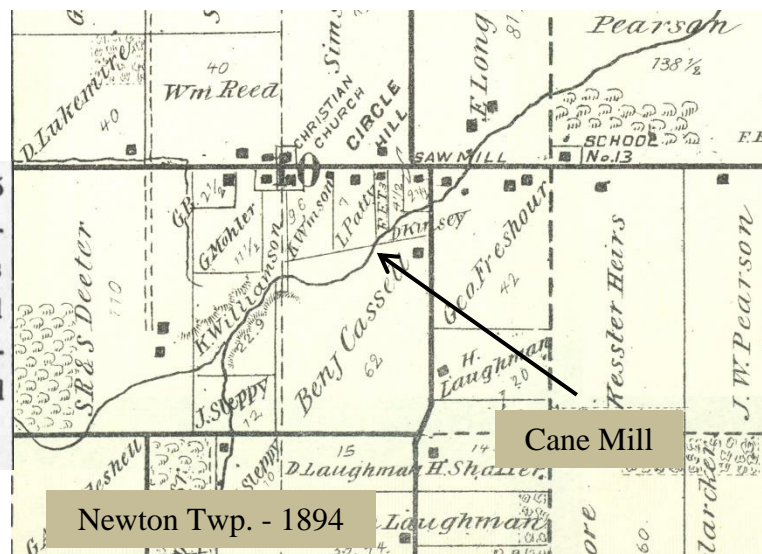
A boiler at George Gibboney's saw mill, two miles south of Bradford, exploded Monday morning and did a great deal of damage to its surroundings. Charles Gibboney, son of the proprietor of the mill, was standing nearest it and received serious injuries. The father and another son were also working about the mill, but were not injured. The mill was badly wrecked.

Greenville Journal
April 13, 1911



Charles Gibboney, aged 25 years, injured in the boiler explosion last week at his father's saw mill near Bradford, died Wednesday evening from the effect of the injuries. Funeral services were held Friday.

Greenville Journal
April 20, 1911



Village Sunoco

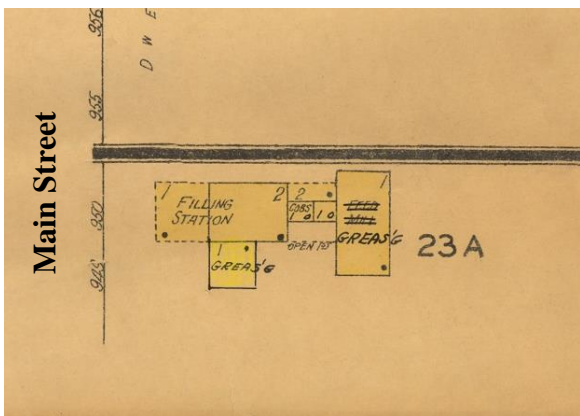


The original building located at 211 South Main Street is believed to have been built around 1902 when it served as a storage facility for the Dayton, Covington, & Piqua Traction Line. Later, a gristmill operated at the rear of the building.

In the late 1920s, the property was purchased by Russell & Marie Elliott who turned it into a Sunoco gas station. In the beginning it was called *Mill Service Station* due to the mill attached to the building.

After WWII, Russ was joined by Pat Kaufman and the station was renamed *Elliott and Kaufman Sunoco*.

In the early to mid-1960s, the business was purchased by Art Netzley. Then, in 1969, Larry Snead purchased it and continued to operate as a full service gas station and general auto repair.



This 1930s Pleasant Hill map shows the filling station. Notice the mill is crossed out and “greas’g” added. This is the time the mill went out of business.

Located at the Sunoco building



In November of 1987, Lonnie Robbins purchased the business and continued to operate it as a full service gas station and auto repair. Lonnie partnered with his brother, Lane Robbins, in June of 1996.

The two decided to start from scratch and tear down the original building to erect a brand new gasoline & convenience store. In December 2007, Lonnie bought out his brother's share of the business and continued operating *The Station* along with the help of his wife Tami, sons Levi and Logan, and daughter Layla.

In 2016, JK Property, LLC purchased the station and changed to Marathon gasoline. It continues operation today.



Aerial view of the Village Sunoco

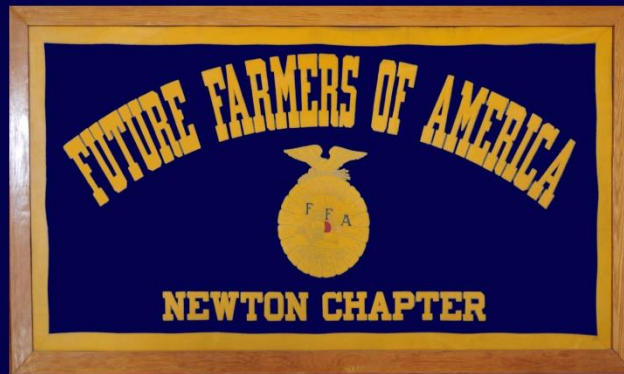
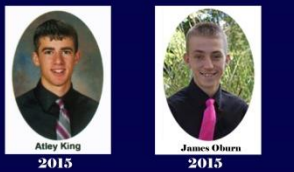
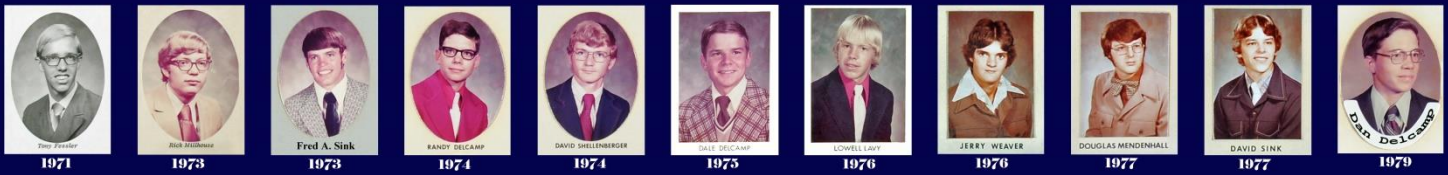


Tony Marino, Dan Hickey, Bob Sollmann, Bill Favorite Cyclist – John Schultz Sept. 2011

Newton State Farmers



Newton FFA State Farmer Degrees



In 1928, the FFA was established in Kansas City, Missouri. The first State Farmer Degree was given in 1929. The first State Farmer from Newton School was Byron Helman in 1931.

- | | | | |
|---------------------------|---------------------------|---------------------|-----------------------|
| 1931 - Byron Helman | 1964 - Rick Miller | 1975 - Dale Delcamp | 1989 - Bridget Kadel |
| 1933 - Kenneth Buckingham | 1965 - Donald Angle | 1976 - Lowell Lavy | 2014 - Tyler Shuman |
| 1937 - Herbert Weaver | 1966 - Arthur Shuman | Jerry Weaver | Nathaniel Maxwell |
| 1938 - Emerson Branson | 1967 - Paul Laughman | 1977 - Dave Sink | 2015 - James Oburn |
| 1940 - Marion Noll | 1968 - Jim Angle | Doug Mendenhall | Atley King |
| 1943 - Robert Wall | 1969 - Paul Yingst | 1979 - Dan Delcamp | R.J. Renner |
| 1949 - Bill Schultz | Joe Deeter | Phil Noll | 2016 - Rachel Justice |
| 1950 - Dale Grove | Dan Zimmerman | Jeff Weeks | Nick Hoover |
| 1955 - James Westfall | 1971 - Tony Fessler | 1980 - Terry Boone | Kyle Maslowski |
| 1959 - Byron Jackson | 1973 - Fred Sink | 1983 - Tony Jackson | Emily McGlynn |
| 1961 - John Miller | Richard Millhouse | Pat Lavy | Windsor Rapp |
| 1962 - Fred Snider | 1974 - Dave Shellenberger | Lynn Lavy | |
| Wayne Noll | Randy Delcamp | 1984 - Lonnie Lavy | |
| David O'Diam | | | |